

# NIFC News

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National Interagency Fire Center  
3833 S. Development Ave.  
Boise, ID 83705



Date: MAY 5, 2003

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## **MILITARY FIREFIGHTING AIRCRAFT ANNUAL TRAINING TO BE IN BOISE**

**BOISE, IDAHO, May 5, 2003...**During the week of May 5, 2003, Boise area residents may be seeing very large military C-130 aircraft with bright orange numbers on the tail flying very slowly and very low. The 302<sup>nd</sup> Airlift Wing of the Air Force Reserve in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the Boise National Forest and the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) are hosting the annual refresher training and re-certification flights for the military aircraft used in wildland firefighting. The aircraft will be operating from the Boise National Forest Air Tanker Base located on the grounds at NIFC. 2003 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> year of MAFFs operations in the United States.

The military C-130s come from bases around the country. In addition to the 302<sup>nd</sup> Airlift Wing of the Air Force Reserve from Colorado, the 146<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, California Air National Guard from Port Hueneme, the 145<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, North Carolina Air National Guard from Charlotte, 153<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing of the Wyoming Air National Guard, will be participating in the exercise. The week includes both classroom and flight training.

The C-130s are equipped with a special slide-in unit called the Modular Airborne Firefighting System, (MAFFs) which allow them to load and drop 3000 gallons of retardant on wildland fires. There are eight MAFFs units currently in operation. The military aircraft are a supplement aerial resource that is activated when the civilian fleet of airtankers is committed. During the annual training and re-certification, the units will be dropping water only on targets chosen by the Boise National Forest.

**MEDIA ADVISORY: A media opportunity is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 8, 2003 at the National Interagency Fire Center. Reporters should be prepared to show photo identification. Enter through the main gate off Development Avenue and escorts will be provided to the aircraft area. An additional opportunity to view a water drop from one of the aircraft will be offered on Thursday, May 8 at 1:00 pm. at the remote-control hobby aircraft area near Kuna-Mora Road. Directions will be provided on request.**

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